

He stood up. He fought the good fight. He fought for all of us. I know that he still have so much to give.

Senator, thank you for your incredible service. Thank you for being such a generous and wonderful friend to me and to my family. I wish you, Landra, and your family many more years of happiness and good work. We will all miss you dearly.

TRIBUTES TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a dear friend and colleague, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, as she retires after three decades in the U.S. Senate.

Senator MIKULSKI has been serving the people of Maryland in one form or another for more than 50 years.

From her time as a social worker helping at-risk children and seniors, to the Baltimore City Council, to her four decades of service in the United States Congress, Senator MIKULSKI has always been a strong champion for women, for working families, and for Maryland.

On the rare occasion I have found myself on the other side of an issue from Senator MIKULSKI, as we in Virginia occasionally have been, I actually find myself wishing Maryland had a little bit less of a tenacious advocate in the Senate than BARBARA MIKULSKI.

But luckily for me, I have much more often had the good fortune to be standing side-by-side with Senator MIKULSKI.

I have been proud to work with her and learn from her on a great many issues which will remain her legacies even after she leaves the Senate.

In her position on the Senate Appropriations Committee, for instance, Senator MIKULSKI has been instrumental in making sure the Federal Government abides by its commitments to Metro, and we have worked together to improve oversight of the system's safety.

In an environment where they are more often treated as political punching bags than like the dedicated public servants they are, Federal employees have always known that they can count on Senator MIKULSKI to have their backs.

Senator MIKULSKI might occasionally have trouble reaching the microphones—but when it comes to the issues affecting women, children, working families, and Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI's voice is nearly always the loudest voice in the room.

Today there are more students in school, more women in the workforce, and fewer seniors living in poverty as a result of her determination and her leadership.

It is well known in this body that Senator MIKULSKI is a force of nature, with a wit to match.

Her signature one-liners aren't just funny—though they usually are—but she also has a way of cutting to the heart of the issue and speaking directly to people that I know will be greatly

missed by both her colleagues and her constituents.

It is no surprise that the people of Maryland have chosen, over and over again, to send this extraordinary leader back to the Senate on their behalf.

Today there are 20 women Senators, but when BARBARA MIKULSKI first decided to “suit up” and run for the Senate, women in public office at any level were a rarity indeed—rarer still in this body.

Thirty years after President Reagan, campaigning for her opponent in that first Senate race, predicted that BARBARA MIKULSKI would go the way of other short-lived fads like the “Edsel, the hula hoop, and the all-asparagus diet,” Senator MIKULSKI retires from the Senate as the longest serving woman in Congressional history.

So while she may be leaving us here in the Senate, one of Senator BARB's greatest legacies may be inspiring generations of American women to follow in her footsteps.

Senator MIKULSKI, thank you for your service and your friendship.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the many accomplishments of my colleague Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, the dean of the Senate women. When she took office during the 100th Congress in 1987, BARBARA was the first Democratic woman Senator elected in her own right. There were only two women Senators at the time, BARBARA and Nancy Kassebaum. Certain expectations that we could consider arcane, such as women were expected to wear skirts or dresses on the floor, were still in place. In 1993, BARBARA, Nancy, and their staffs mounted a simple protest—they wore trousers on the Senate floor.

“The Senate parliamentarian had looked at the rules to see if it was okay,” she recounted. “So, I walk on that day and you would have thought I was walking on the moon. It caused a big stir.”

As someone who rarely wears skirts and only wears pantsuits on the Senate floor, I and many others are grateful. This simple act of commonsense defiance, if you will, in a body steeped in tradition, exemplifies BARBARA's approach to getting things done and getting on with the important matters of the day. That she is a trailblazer goes without saying.

Throughout her time in the Senate, BARBARA has fought for equal pay for equal work. The gender pay gap costs women hundreds of thousands of dollars over their lifetime. She led the charge in the Senate to pass the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, and I am proud to stand with her in calling for the passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act and other equal pay proposals.

As our dean, usually over dinner, we get to know each other on a personal level. In a body where these opportunities are rare, it matters. During the summer of 2014, it was my turn to host our gathering. I greeted each Senator with a lei, served local food from Hawaii, and hosted a hula performance.

The Aloha spirit was definitely present.

The next day, BARBARA told me that the dinner was very special and gave her a better understanding about what it must be like to be in Hawaii. It meant a lot to me for BARBARA to make that observation because Hawaii truly is a special place where embracing and caring for others, our ohana, is how we aspire to live.

BARBARA has shown her Aloha spirit to me and so many others throughout her time in public service. I will miss her wit, leadership, drive, and compassion.

Aloha, BARBARA, and a hui hou, “until we meet again.”

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the contributions of my colleague and friend, Senator BARBARA BOXER. While her distinguished time in the House and Senate comes to a close at the end of the 114th Congress, she will continue to be engaged and serve her community.

During her more than 30 years in the House and Senate, BARBARA worked tirelessly to create a better future for all Americans. When she first announced that she would run for the Senate in 1990, BARBARA declared, “I will be running based on issues of the environment, a world of peace, economic prosperity, individual freedom of choice and freedom of the arts.”

This declaration defined her time in Congress.

Becoming the first woman to chair the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works reflected her decades of dedication to protecting the environment. BARBARA was unafraid to take on big oil, and fought to block oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. She also led the effort in the Senate to invest in the development of clean energy technology and to strengthen protections for our oceans.

BARBARA knew that, for many, achieving “economic prosperity” meant attaining a college education. But the soaring cost of college keeps them from attaining a degree. Each year, BARBARA was one of the strongest leaders to ensure that college students have access to Pell grants, which nearly half of college students in our country depend upon. BARBARA's advocacy moved the ball forward, and I was proud to join her in crafting a caucus-wide bill that included our provisions to strengthen and protect Pell grants, and lower interest rates on student debt.

BARBARA also never forgot her promise to protect “freedom of choice.” She authored the Freedom of Choice Act of 2004, which would have affirmed that “every woman has the fundamental right” to make her own reproductive health decisions. Without fail, BARBARA leads us each and every time that access to reproductive health care comes under attack.

While BARBARA's departure leaves the Senate without one of its strongest champions for the environment, college affordability, and reproductive rights, we will continue to fight for these core priorities as she would have done.

It has been a privilege to serve alongside a steadfast champion like BARBARA.

She has served Maryland with utter conviction, and I know she will continue to be a progressive force in this new chapter of her life.

Aloha, BARBARA, and a hui hou, "until we meet again."

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, much of the time here in the Senate, we are engaged in pretty fierce partisan battles. I would like to take a break from that for a moment and talk about the four Republican Senators who will not be back when the 115th Congress convenes next month. While we may have different political philosophies and policy prescriptions, I respect and admire each of them, and I will miss working with all of them.

KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. President, Senator AYOTTE and I serve together on the Small Business Committee. I have seen firsthand her commitment to helping small businesses in New Hampshire and across the Nation. She is like so many other Senators, past and present, from New England States: pragmatic and willing to reach across the aisle to get things done.

Prior to her election to the Senate, Senator AYOTTE served as the chief of New Hampshire's Homicide Unit and deputy attorney general before she became the State's first female attorney general in 2004. She was appointed to that position by a Republican Governor, but she was reappointed twice by a Democratic Governor.

In the short span of one Senate term, Senator AYOTTE has become a respected voice on national security issues while serving on the Armed Services Committee and the Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee. Foreign Policy magazine listed Senator AYOTTE as one of the top 50 Republicans on international affairs.

Senator AYOTTE comes from a military family and is married to an Iraq War veteran—Lieutenant Colonel Joe Daley—so she has been a staunch supporter of our men and women in uniform and their families.

Senator AYOTTE has worked hard to give New Hampshire veterans more choices when it comes to health care since the State does not have a full-service Veterans Administration, VA, medical facility. To help veterans in New Hampshire's North Country access care closer to home, she successfully pushed for the opening of VA clinics in Colebrook and Berlin.

Senator AYOTTE has been a leader in the fight against opioid abuse and ad-

diction, helping Congress to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, to improve prevention and treatment, support those in recovery, and ensure first responders have the tools they need. She helped to pass legislation to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, crack down on sexual assault in the military, make college campuses safer, and improve mental health first aid training and suicide prevention programs.

Senator AYOTTE has followed in the footsteps of other Republican Senators from New England, such as Robert Stafford of Vermont and John Chafee of Rhode Island, who are true conservatives when it comes to the environment. She crossed party lines to vote for Federal clean air rules that protect New Hampshire's air and water from cross-State pollution and to deploy the best available technology to reduce pollution from energy production. She helped pass the Better Buildings Act to encourage greater energy efficiency in commercial buildings, and she has been a strong supporter of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has helped protect thousands of acres in New Hampshire.

I have enjoyed working with Senator AYOTTE and send my best wishes to her and her husband, Joe, and their children Katherine and Jacob.

DAN COATS

Mr. President, there is a famous quote attributed to the American author F. Scott Fitzgerald: "There are no second acts in American lives." We all know that to be untrue and, as it turns out, so did Fitzgerald, who was quintessentially American. What he actually wrote, in an essay called "My Lost City," is this: "I once thought that there were no second acts in American lives."

If we want to see a successful "second act" we need to look no further than to the senior Senator from Indiana, Mr. COATS. He is actually on about his fourth act.

Senator COATS graduated from Wheaton College and then began his long service to our Nation by enlisting in the U.S. Army. Following his military service, he attended the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law. He excelled academically, becoming associate editor of the Indiana Law Review, and earned his juris doctor degree.

Senator COATS served as a district representative to then-Representative Dan Quayle. When Dan Quayle was elected to the Senate in 1980, DAN COATS won his House seat and was re-elected four times, never receiving less than 60 percent of the vote. When Dan Quayle was elected Vice President in 1988, DAN COATS was appointed to the Senate seat being vacated and then won elections in 1990 and 1992.

During what I will call Senator COATS' "first" congressional career, he focused on cutting taxes and government spending and reforming entitlement programs. In 1998, he honored a

term limit pledge he had made to his Hoosier constituents and did not run for reelection to the Senate.

For many people, 18 years in Congress might be enough, but Senator COATS was just getting started. After he left the Senate, he joined the prestigious law firm of Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand. In 2001, then-President Bush nominated Senator COATS to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany. He arrived in Germany just 3 days before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. In the aftermath of 9/11, Ambassador Coats established excellent relations with then-opposition leader and future German Chancellor Angela Merkel—a crucial ally—and managed the construction of a new U.S. Embassy in the heart of Berlin, next to the Brandenburg Gate.

Senator COATS served honorably as Ambassador for 3 and one-half years and then returned to practicing law at another "blue chip" law firm, King & Spalding. But he also served as president of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and on the boards of many civic and volunteer organizations, including the Center for Jewish and Christian Values, which he cochaired with Senator Joe Lieberman. And Senator COATS and his wife, Marsha, formed the Foundation For American Renewal to continue their engagement in faith-based initiatives.

Senator COATS began his "second" congressional career by running successfully for his old Senate seat in 2010. During Senator COATS' second stint, I have had the pleasure of serving with him on the Finance Committee, where we worked together to help charities receive timely notice on issues related to their tax-exempt status. I appreciate Senator COATS' calm and steady demeanor, the diligence he applies to his work, and the civility he extends to his colleagues.

Senator COATS may be retiring from the Senate, but I have a hunch there will be yet another successful act in his long, distinguished career. While we may have policy disagreements, I have no doubt that Senator COATS is committed to the common good and will find new ways to serve. I anticipate, however, that he will also seek to spend more time with his wife, Marsha, whom he met in college, their three children, and their 10 grandchildren.

MARK KIRK

Mr. President, John Kennedy wrote "Profiles in Courage" nearly 50 years ago. But for the last 6 years, we have had yet another profile in courage here in the Senate: the junior Senator from Illinois, Mr. KIRK. In 2012, he suffered a devastating ischemic stroke. He had to relearn how to do basic things, like walking. It took a year of intensive physical therapy at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago—physical therapy that has been likened to boot camp. When he returned on January 3, 2013, and climbed the 45 steps of the Capitol Building to reenter the Senate, it was